



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

July 6, 2000

H.R. 4446

A bill to ensure that the Secretary of Energy may continue to exercise certain authorities under the Price-Anderson Act

*As ordered reported by the House Committee on Armed Services
on June 28, 2000*

H.R. 4446 would define and clarify the lines of authority that the Secretary of Energy has to enforce penalties for nuclear safety violations under the Price-Anderson Act. (The Price-Anderson Act provides a framework for resolving liability issues in the event of an accident involving nuclear materials.) With respect to the National Nuclear Security Administration, the bill would require the Secretary to exercise authority only through the Administrator for Nuclear Security consistent with delegation authority under current law. For the rest of the Department of Energy, the bill would clarify the Secretary's authority to enforce the Price-Anderson Act through the Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety, and Health.

CBO estimates that H.R. 4446 would have little or no effect on the federal budget because implementing it would not require significant changes in current practice. The bill contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

On May 23, 2000, CBO transmitted a cost estimate for H.R. 4446 as ordered reported by the House Committee on Commerce. These two versions of the legislation are very similar but call for different lines of authority. CBO estimates that the earlier version would have no budgetary effect because it would not change current practice. The version ordered reported by the House Committee on Armed Services would change current practice somewhat and thus could have a small impact on the budget.

The CBO staff contacts for this estimate are Raymond J. Hall and Lisa Cash Driskill. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.